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THE

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VOL. III.

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THE HOLY BIBLE.

THIS is the acknowledged title of the book of books. Nor do we know that the propriety of it, as designating the most peculiar feature of that wonderful work, has ever been directly brought in question. Yet we constantly hear objections to the Bible, which betray a most unfounded and injurious doubt on that point; for each of them, if rightly interpreted, would be substantially this: "I am holier than the Bible!"

It is certain that no claim can be higher than that made by this book, upon the reverence, confidence, and submission of all men. It challenges all human and angelic inspection, when it declares, that "every word of God is pure." We do not, indeed, claim for it an accommodation to all the conventional notions of the successive ages and stages of society through which it is to pass; nor a prudish conformity to the morbid delicacy and refinement which may be found in any coterie of "mutual admirationists;" nor a symbolizing with all the pseudo-philanthropy which, from age to age, is seen rivalling its pretensions. Nor shall we here undertake a vindication of the claims of the Scriptures to be the true and only standard by which all moral sentiment and principle, all manners, customs, maxims, and notions, are to be tried; and by which the public taste is to be formed. We intend merely to relieve candid minds from difficulties which, even if unnoticed by themselves, greatly hinder that cordial, simple, confiding employment of the Scriptures, by which they become "profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction,

for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

We have known an entire and immense sect make what they call the indelicacy of the Scriptures one of many reasons for refusing the use of them to children and the unlearned. Of the sincerity of the Council of Trent, and its adherents, we may not be competent judges. But we are compelled to demand, whether the world has gained by exchanging the word of God for the inquiries of the confessional, irresponsible, guarded from exposure to the public eye, poured for centuries into the ears of women and children by such men as Rome has permitted to exercise this ghostly function? Has the world gained in purity and happiness, by substituting this for the popular use of the Bible; for the perusal, by every human being, of that which his Creator has judged it safe and necessary for him to hear? We repel the impious charge, that the Bible is not a safe book, a proper book for any human being, and all human beings. Even if it were true, that it contained passages whose direct tendency, unless guarded against, would, in the present state of human nature be hurtful, it would be no more than is true of many things in what we call "nature," whose authorship must certainly be traced to a holy Creator; who designed not injury, but benefit by all his works; and yet, who so constructed the world that men might be injured, nay, would be injured by many things in it, if not carefully guarded against. Hurtful animals and poisonous substances have their place and work in this beneficent structure; and man will be injured by them, if he is merely careless; much more, if predisposed to self-destruction. We admit, however, the existence of no such hurtful tendency in any part of the Scriptures, except by wilful perversion. We have the most conclusive evidence that it was "all given by inspiration of God;" written by "holy men of God," who "spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" and is "all profitable." We may not be able to shew all the design of each passage, but we have seen so much importance in many passages, that this fastidiousness would have excluded, as to justify our resting with entire confidence in the conviction, that if we knew more, we should see the same importance in all. We admit that the Bible contains many passages which, all agree, should not be read in promiscuous assemblies, as society now is,

If any person, then, is disquieted by these features of the sacred writings; or, if he is shaken by all that is said about the vindictiveness of Moses and David; or, the record of crimes committed by the very authors of some of the books, let him begin anew his examination of the subject, by inquiring what the scope of the work is. We do not believe that any man ever doubted whether the whole intention of the authors of that book was, to produce perfect moral purity in man. We can conceive of one saying: "If I should take the spirit of the Jews for a model, I would hate my enemies, and glory in exterminating them; or, if I should adopt the language and sentiment of many of the Psalms, I should be vindictive." But we will not now stop to defend Moses or David in these matters. The question we here propose is not, Whether the Jews were commissioned to destroy the Canaanites? or whether there is not a profound and vital principle involved in the question of the imprecatory Psalms, which our philanthropic skeptics appear never to have contemplated? But we inquire, Whether any man believes that the aim and intention of the writers of that volume is, to make men revengeful and warlike? and whether Jesus Christ, in sanctioning and commanding the Old Testament, as he did, aimed to make warriors and vindictive men? We might rest this point on that appeal. But we ask again, Whether any man ever rejected the divine authority of the Bible on account of its injurious influence on his character? or whether he earnestly desired to become holy, and found that book a hindrance to him? or whether the long battle which that book has fought, has been against the holiness of mankind, and against the holiest of men?

We believe that no such case as we have just described, unless accompanied by insanity, is on human record. The work contains two grand divisions; the law-system, and the gospel-system. The precepts of the Bible are the embodiment of all moral purity. The man who should perfectly obey them, would be like a spotless angel, moving among a race of sinful men. The penalties and threatenings all move in the same line. They exhibit the whole character, government, and providence of Jehovah, as set for the defence of moral purity, and the extermination of all moral evil. The rewards set before men in this book, are all holy in themselves, and encouragements to holiness. Into the heaven which is set forth, "nothing that defileth," can enter.

In a word, the sum of its requirements is a supreme and perfect complacency in him who is infinite in holiness. "The law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good."

Some, however, have imagined, while they could not deny what we have maintained as to the law, that the gospel abates this standard, and relaxes the resistance of the law to sin. But they ever misapprehend its nature, in making this objection. The entire scope of the gospel is, to release the mind from despair and discouragement, in returning to God and virtue. The Pharisees of Christ's day could not understand this feature of his ministry; and it is not surprising if those of subsequent days should have had the same embarrassment. If a soul is contented to live in a sinful state, the word of God has only warnings and exhortations for it; but the instant it would burst its fetters, and leave the pollution of a proud and ungodly heart, the Bible offers all the aid of heaven, all the sympathy of God, all the glories of eternity, to strengthen that purpose. We need say no more, than to refer to its tests of character; its "exceeding great and precious promises, by which we are made partakers of the divine nature;" its rewards; and, above all, its model, Christ.

What then in fact, and in experience, has been the influence of that book on the human heart, and the human race? Socrates and Plato labored to elevate man, by rectifying his philosophy, and by purifying his religion. But they failed of two grand elements; a remedy of sufficient efficacy; a remedy which the unlettered could apply to themselves. "This remedy did Wisdom find." "The gospel was preached to the poor." Unlettered men, savages, murderers, robbers, harlots, heard it, felt its power, and were purified by it. It wrought prodigies in the renovation of individual character. It gradually spread outward and upward in society, until it was infused into all the fountains of public sentiment and social influence; until the religion of the people, the morality of the philosophers, and the maxims and customs of society, were radically changed. The spirit of revenge was no longer incorporated in religion; pride no longer held the place belonging to humility; polygamy, unjustifiable divorce, and other fashionable crimes, even of the Jewish patriarchs, were branded with ignominy; legislation, manners, morals, maxims, social usages, and domestic life, all felt a new breath of heaven at once purifying and invigorating them. And however

much the Christian nations may fall below the purity of the Bible, their laws, their customs, and their social life, are immeasurably above those of every other people.

But we have not yet met the objections in their strength. For this purpose, we must come to the contents of the book, and let them speak for themselves. We cannot, however, but remark, how certain it is, that, the world over, the best families and the best men in any neighborhood or community, are great admirers of the Bible ; that it is most read in the best regulated households ; that it runs through the purest literature of every age, like gold threads in a silken tissue ; and that the sublimest strains of eloquence and of song are but the echoes of its pure effusions.

Still, it is said, that there are passages and phrases in the Bible which are entirely offensive to a refined ear ; and that there are other parts which degrade, rather than elevate, the soul. These objections are sometimes uttered by such persons, and with so much seriousness of manner, that we cannot pass them in silence, however erroneous they may seem to us. We admit that there are descriptions and phrases in the Bible, which one would not wish to read before a promiscuous assembly ; nor in all cases, even in the family. These cases may be reduced to several classes. One is, that of words and phrases which are not repeated in the ordinary intercourse of good society. Some of these, it will be noticed, belong to the conversation of an ancient and oriental society, whose standard of refinement was very different from ours, perhaps equally pure in its spirit, though differing in form. Others belong to the ever-fluctuating usages of language. The translators were men of the highest social standing ; and they employed the language of polite society in their day, so far as it truly expressed the meaning of the inspired text. Nor do we hesitate, when meeting such phrases, to substitute others, admitted by the speech of our day. But the objection strikes below phraseology, and affects the very substance of the work. There are scenes in Genesis, and Judges, and other parts, at which some stumble, who have at best, only a faint reverence for the Scriptures. And even some noted critics, and defenders of the sacred canon, venture the shafts of their wit against the Canticles, and its commentators and admirers.

Now it must be remembered that the Scriptures were written for all ages and all nations, and for very various ends ; or rather,

for one great end, to be accomplished by very various means. As an eminent critic has remarked : "There is not a narration in the Old Testament, which had not once its use. Examine the story of Er and Onan, and of Judah's connexion with his daughter-in-law, Tamar ; which is certainly among the narratives that at first sight, we should be inclined to spare, and even be prone to wonder how it came there. Yet in Matt. i. 3, we find the fruit of that unlawful connection, Pharez and Zara, in the genealogical register of the evangelist. It is one link in counting the genealogy of Joseph, from Abraham downwards."

In regard to many of the topics introduced into the sacred narrative, we would further remark, that the book of providence, a leaf of which we turn over every day, contains a multitude of topics, which we read for ourselves, but about which we converse with great reserve. And this is, in fact, a part of the discipline of life, cultivating refinement by regulating the kind and degree of attention we shall bestow upon such objects and events, and calling into exercise the sense of propriety in all our conversation. Indeed, if we adopted so refined a rule of exclusion as this objection involves, we should go out of this world. The Bible is also written as much for the individual, and for the secret place of his holiest retirement, as for social life and great assemblies. There, it may be very important that our heavenly Father should unveil to us, in his own holy presence, and with his own chastened description, some of the wickedness that has been, not to excite our admiration, but our disgust at sin, and our dread of its consequences ; and to shew to children and adults, that his holy eye marks every transgression. If a prurient imagination is excited to evil by such descriptions, in such connexions, it is as when the sun-beam in its purity, falls on a dunghill, and the natural exhalation betrays the rank corruption. But, it is asked, Why subject the wicked heart to such an influence ? That appeal arraigns the whole plan of providence. Men are tempted to sin by God's works, made for totally different purposes. "Let no man say when he is tempted : 'I am tempted of God,' for God tempteth no man."

The main strength however, of the attack upon the purity of the Scriptures, we suppose to be founded upon the wars of Moses, and those of the Judges and Kings of Israel ; and especially upon the imprecatory Psalms.

Let us consider the exterminating wars of the Jews. When we enter upon a formal defence of that part of the Scriptures which records these wars, we feel as if we had set up a man of straw, to shew our skill in pulling it down again. And yet it is so real a stumbling-block to many, that it may be a serious and beneficent service to place them at our own point of observation. It must, then, be borne in mind, that the Bible is, in part, a reduction to writing of the great plan of providence, sometimes anticipative or prophetical ; sometimes retrospective or historical. Is providence unholy ? Surely not. Why then, should the record of its proceedings be so ? But, it is replied, our difficulty is with God's approving of the indiscriminate destruction of men, women, and children. Certainly he approves of it so far as to threaten that he will do it ; as actually to do it in every age. Either all this suffering comes to express his indignation against sin, or it has no meaning. And if God in all his providence, has ever been inflicting suffering on sinners, has exterminated nations by wars and plagues, and *that* is not unholy, how can it be unholy to record it ? And why may not Moses, and the Israelites, have proceeded as the magistrate or judge proceeds now to the execution of the sentence of the law by the proper agency, without any wrong feeling ? The infliction of punishment, even the administration of parental reproof, may be performed with wrong feeling. But it is not so of necessity. That Moses and the Jews punished those vile nations, and so far dried up the fountains of crime, was right ; and so far the Scripture approves of it. If they indulged wrong feelings, it was their fault ; and they unquestionably, as we often see in their history, met the same retributive justice for their wickedness. But is it not hurtful to us to read these records ? That depends upon yourself. It may hurt you to read an account of the earthquake in Lisbon ; and it may do you good. You are responsible for the effects. The history is not responsible ; and especially if the event is described as a part of the providential action of Him who contendeth with man in righteousness.

But, it is said, the Psalms breathe out threatening, slaughter, and vengeance. To approximate to the objector as much as possible, we will concede that when we read the ninth verse of Psalm cxxxvii. we tremble. But the source of this emotion is by no means the same as that of his feeling. Ours is a horror at the terrible nature of sin as exemplified in the conduct of the

Babylonians, which brought a servant of God, under the inspiration of the pure Spirit of God, to conquer his natural sympathies so far ; and thus fearfully to demand that God should interfere, and destroy the very race that ever had, and it appeared, ever would carry on the trade of murder and oppression. Babylon was an instance of a nation throwing itself into this position : “ We are determined to worship devils, to defy the living God, to live in wealth and debauchery, to be a nation of men-hunters ; war is our trade ; the deeds of our heroes are the themes of our poetry ; and the groans of our vanquished foes are the chorus of our festive songs. The degradation of the daughters of Zion is our delight. Slaughter, vengeance, slavery, tribute, are the terms of fellowship we hold out to mankind. As to the worship of Jehovah, it shall never stand while Bel has a temple or a worshipper.” The alternative then was, by the choice and decision of Babylon herself, extermination on one side or the other. Her children were to be trained in the same demoniacal spirit. What, then, could a pious Jew say in such circumstances ? He had not created the alternative ; he did not desire it. That we have not exaggerated the case, the whole history of those times will shew.

But we must not rest in particular instances. We have selected one of the strongest as a specimen, to test it by a candid examination of its meaning and spirit. On these passages as a whole, our difficulties respect the feelings displayed by their authors ; and the feelings which they awaken in the readers.

A very able defence of the purity of the feeling exhibited in these passages will be found in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* of February, 1844. The ground of that defence is, that indignation at the commission of crime, compassion toward the injured, and a sense of injustice strengthening with time, constitute original and universal principles of human nature. These principles or sentiments are not malicious, but essential to a generous and enlightened sympathy. That this position is tenable, nay, that it cannot be shaken, we are quite confident. And if no other defence could be made, it would be sufficient for that charity which thinketh no evil, which imputes the good motive where a good motive can account for the act in question. But there is a higher ground than this, which has been already suggested. We are living in the midst of God’s holy actions. The laws of nature are directly his acts ; every thing in fact is his, and involves his

direct volition, except the sinful acts of his creatures. And his will mysteriously blends itself, yet uncontaminated, with the corrupt actions of men. He gave his son to death by the "wicked hands" of Judas, and Pilate, and the Roman soldiers. The question is of the first practical moment: Do we approve of God's actions? Do we cordially approve of them? Shall we exult in them in heaven and on earth? Or is there always to be a dark, sullen, suspicious remembrance of his overthrowing Sodom, destroying Canaan, and ordaining "Tophet of old;" making it "deep and large; the pile thereof being fire and much wood; the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, kindling it." We are to determine whether, when Jesus, the judge, pronounces the last sentence: "Depart ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," our human sympathy, or our loyal sympathy with the judge, is to prevail. One, or the other, must do so. We regard this question as one of deep and solemn interest, involving not merely our acceptance or rejection of the Bible; but our loyalty and happiness under the dominion of Jesus. Shall we be morose, captious, and gloomy? — "prisoners' friends," rather than friends of holiness, and of God?

It is not mere human sympathy, and moral refinement, that meets with such difficulty in these passages. It is not a mark of superior character to be offended at them. We trace it to many causes, betraying either an utter want of piety, or of a sufficiently intelligent piety. It betrays the want of a full appreciation of the circumstances of the writer; or, of the exercise of what may be called the historical imagination; a want of charity towards the authors, in supposing bad motives, where good motives are possible and probable; a want of zeal for justice and religion; a want of sympathy with providence, and thus a want of preparation for heaven. The prayer of earth and the praise of heaven are to have at least one expression in common: "Thy will be done!" It is not, then, merely passages of the Bible that offend, but it is equally passages of providence, — texts of the world's great history. This sensitiveness betrays not a want of sympathy with Moses and David merely, but also with Jesus Christ. He expressed the will of his Father in his fearful threatenings, and in that will he fully acquiesced. Are we then holier, more humane, than he that came to die for us! May the atheistical historian record the destruction of wicked and tyrannical men with satis-

faction, and escape this censure ; but must holy men of God, giving utterance to the feeling of righteous exultation in the final overthrow of the powers that resisted all good and fostered all wickedness, be considered worthy of abhorrence ? Life is a deep tragedy. In the three great dramas of Macbeth, Wallenstein, and Faust, the world is satisfied with a tragical ending : nay, demands it. " Yet," says the profound Schlegel, " a tragedy of this kind is perhaps the more perfect in proportion as the destruction is represented, not as anything external, capricious, or predestinated, but as a darkness into which the hero has sunk, step by step, descending, not without free-will, and in consequence of his guilt." Indeed, if the three rules of dramatic composition laid down by this great critic were applied to the Scriptures, they would be found to abound in the highest specimens of each kind. There are exhibitions of each of the three kinds of " dramatic conclusion and representation,— those of destruction, of reconciliation, and of glorification." Such is life, such is the Bible. And in this world and the next, we must cordially approve of the severer, as well as the milder, attributes of Jehovah and his government. These passages should cause us to tremble at the exhibition they make of the nature and consequences of sin ; to revere the awful justice there manifested ; and to fly to that mercy, which waits to deliver us from deserved judgments. " Thy Word is very pure ; therefore thy servant loveth it."

FREEDOM OF INQUIRY, AND ROMANISM.

THE chief constitutional elements of the Romish hierarchy are, the infallibility of the pope, the union of Church and State, and the pope's supremacy in both. The pope being the Vicar of God on earth, and charged with political, as well as religious interests, the civil and ecclesiastical functionaries, directly or indirectly, receive their jurisdiction from him. The king is therefore considered as regularly and securely seated on his throne, only when he has received the confirmatory unction of the sovereign pontiff. Then the temporal prince becomes the pledged friend and ally of the spiritual, and the civil power is made subservient to the

ecclesiastical. Thus the papal throne towers above all earthly “principalities and powers,” and a most humiliating submission to the decisions of the reputed Infallible, is exacted of both potentates and people.

What, now, has been the bearing of this principle of ecclesiastical constitution, upon freedom of inquiry? It is evident, that in a single brief article, little can be done in answer to such a question, except to delineate some general and well-known historical facts.

As the Romish hierarchy became consolidated, the Bible was gradually withdrawn from the people, and hidden in old cathedrals and the dusty corners of convent libraries. The temple of knowledge was locked against all eager inquirers, and the key hung up in the Vatican at Rome. Nearly simultaneous with this, the right of private judgment was taken away. The church, or rather, the hierarchy, is made the only authorized mediator between the Father of mercies, and his ignorant, erring children. What she teaches, they must receive; and from all that she forbids, they must scrupulously abstain.

Now what *results* followed this withdrawal of the Bible, and this denial of the right of private judgment?

“ Ah, when the searching eye of heaven is hid,
Then thieves and robbers range abroad unseen.”

The Saviour of the world is displaced from his mediatorial throne, by the elevation of his virgin mother. The holiness of poor canonized saints, is made transferable for the benefit of rich, confessing, although unrepenting, sinners. In the fiscal arrangements of the church, births and burials, prayers and pardons, the suspension of the divine law and its satisfaction,— all things, except the liberty to believe and teach the pure gospel, are paid for in gold; the living are laid under tribute for the alleged benefit of the dead; not content with assessing men while in the flesh, she consigns them to purgatorial torments of her own invention; releasement from which even the holiest can obtain, only by masses at so much apiece, with a discount for a large quantity. In exchange for the withdrawn Word of God, and the suppressed right of private judgment and free inquiry, she gives to her deluded children the benefits of her most wonderful arts, not set down in chemical nomenclatures, of transmuting bread and wine

into the veritable divinity, flesh and blood of the Redeemer ; and this without changing their qualities. She teaches them to discover, and preserve, and multiply indefinitely, the bones of canonized saints, the wood of the sacred cross, fragments of the ark, thorns from the mock crown of the Saviour, and shreds of his holy garment, and girdles and slippers of Mary, his mother. She grants unlimited license in the ancient art of shrine-making ; and her traffic is in crucifixes, rosaries, breviaries, images, copes, and cowls. She claims to impart to her priesthood the power of miracles, and of preaching with such efficacy as to cause horses to kneel in adoration before the host, swallows to acknowledge the Catholic faith, and devout fishes to assemble as attentive auditors.

The genius of the Romish system is complete hostility to free thought. No other enemy is so feared by the mother of abominations. Her priesthood is hence bound to an unquestioning obedience to her imperious will. And that they may have no hindering entanglements from social ties, the vow of perpetual celibacy is upon them ; although many of them, says Macaulay, are “just as licentious as a fine sense of the graceful will permit.” Her discipline is a regime of privilege and power, of sanctity and sacrilege, most sagaciously contrived to keep from the human mind all elements of noble achievement, and render it like an exhausted receiver, within which no glowing sentiment, or breathing thought can live. Her order is the enforced regularity of absolutism. Her peace is the tranquillity of ignorance and of stupidity. Her unity is the harmony of chaos,—the gregariousness of all manner of clean and unclean beasts, driven together by the hounds and horns of her inquisitorial huntsmen. Her wars have been against “the pestilent liberty of speech and the press.” Her vestments are dripping with the blood of the martyrs.

There is an almost resistless artistic beauty and power of appeal to the imagination, in the “dim religious light,” and the magic lanthorn which are essential to a successful exhibition. In the light fore-ground, the arts of music, poetry, painting, and statuary, appear to the entranced beholder, like truth, nature, and freedom. But beyond, in the shaded vista, all is cold, and cramped, and remorseless as death ; when men

“Talk of graves, and worms, and epitaphs,
Make dust their papers, and with rainy eye
Write sorrow on the bosom of the earth.”

One of the chief means on which the church of Rome has relied for suppressing free thought and speech, is the Inquisition. Within the enclosures of this "court of death," are found her iron shears, with which the faith of men was wont to be pared, and shapen into agreement with her canons and her catechisms. There is the statue of the blessed virgin, with her spiked brazen bosom, and her iron arms, with which this tender mother receives her wayward children to her fond embrace. And there, too, are the huge "keys" of St. Peter, and the deep dungeons and guarded cells, and massive doors, within which she locks up poor tempted pilgrims, to keep them unspotted from the world, and uninfecte^d by the contagion of free inquiry. Behind all, upon his bloody throne, sits the dark-visaged inquisitor. His "bones are marrowless," and his "blood is cold," and he has a "lean and hungry look," and is filled "top-full of direst cruelty." For this inhuman work, a laic must not be taken, for he has some social bands, or some "dregs of conscience," which may make him a coward. A monk, an isolated, dehumanized monk, is the only person perfectly qualified for the office. Suspicion drags before him the high and the low; and on suspicion he consigns the body to the flames of the stake, and the soul to the torments of hell.

The most concealed germ of freedom of inquiry has been hunted out of the secret depths of the soul, by the disguised or open emissaries of the Inquisition. It was the proclaimed object and intent of this spiritual court, to prevent free thought and speech. Every trace of them, in domestic or civil life, it sought to exterminate. "Dishonor of the reason," says Schiller, "and the murder of the soul, constitute its vows. Its instruments are terror and disgrace. Every passion is in its pay, and its snares lie in every joy of life. Even solitude is not secure from its espionage; and the fear of its omnipresence, holds freedom fettered, even in the depths of the soul. All the instincts of humanity has it trodden down under the feet of credulity, and to it have been made to yield all those bands which men esteem holiest. All claims upon his race are, for the heretic, disallowed. For, by the least infraction of the law of mother church, he has destroyed his humanity. A modest doubt as to the infallibility of the pope, is esteemed parricide. Even the lifeless body belonging to the heretic is cursed. No destiny can rescue its victims, and the grave itself is no refuge from its terrible arms."

Another auxiliary of the Romish church, in her wars against freedom of inquiry, is the Order of Jesuits. In this order was "concentrated the quintessence of the Catholic spirit." To the three vows of poverty, chastity, and monastic obedience, common to other orders, Loyola added a *fourth*, peculiar to the members of his society. It was the vow of obedience to the pope in the service of the church, free from all charge for their support. This procured them their institution from Paul III., in 1540. In nine years they gained a superiority to all human authority and control, except that of the pope. The constitution of the society is essentially military, and most rigidly despotic, all power being lodged with the general. In his hands, all are to be as "a staff," or "as a dead body." And yet, it was the boast of Ignatius, that he wished for only one month to secure the conquest of the spirit, and initiate one into the order. This achievement over the will and conscience is made by means of the "spiritual exercises." "These," says Father de Ravignan, "have created the society. They maintain it, preserve it; and give it life." Hence this book is placed at the threshold of the order. In thirty days, it regenerates. During this period, the novice is secluded from the world. He contemplates the life of Christ in a *military* parable. Two companies, two standards, two chiefs, two armies, two spirits, are drawn out before his excited imagination. Satan appears in Babylon. On his banners are engraven, in flaming characters, "Riches, Honor, Pride." Jesus is seated on a low plain in Jerusalem, surrounded by images of sweetness, and peace, and gentleness. "Poverty, Reproach, Humility," are inscribed on his banner. This is called the meditation of the two standards, in view of which the trembling pupil is called to choose; yet, into which so much has been thrown that is imposing and dazzling, of the glory of monastic life, as to leave him almost without the power of free choice. He is taken in contemplation, to the infernal regions. He is shewn the writhing and burning souls of the lost, the heated furnaces, and the huge broiling monsters. He sees the smoke of their torment, and snuffs the sulphuric and putrid odor, and even tastes the wormwood and the gall. He sees his own sins traced upon paper, in their different enormity, by lines of different sizes. Now he prostrates himself with his face to the ground, and now lies upon his back, as the book directs. He sits, and stands, and sighs, and groans, and weeps, and

reflects, and prays, all by a prescribed rule. In this way, the victim is brought to the will of the ghostly fathers. By this means, the spirit is fitted to the mould. The man is lost in the order. His last act of freedom is his choice of perpetual slavery. His consecration is not to Jesus, but to the pretended "Company of Jesus." "If the authority declares, that that which seems to you white, is black, affirm that it is black."* Thus, by a mysterious and resistless process, by voluntary acts, and involuntary admissions, men are borne from the path of humanity, into the enclosures of a society hostile to humanity. From the life of free thoughts and free words, they are taken into the close atmosphere of the tombs, to lie as corpses in the caverns of the dead. The order is a complete monarchy over the mind, conscience, will, and estates of its members. Espionage and inquisitions reign in all grades and institutions of the company. All are watched by all; and all give account to the general of the order, who gives account to no one.

The agency of the Jesuits in causing the great reaction in favor of Romanism, after the Reformation, is written by every modern historian of the Church. But so arrogant, ambitious, and despotic did they every where shew themselves, so intolerant of an equal in their missionary fields, so eager to monopolize the richest commerce, and to engross the richest benefices, and to occupy all the high places of power, that they have been banished by nearly every civilized nation on the globe. What the Inquisition sought to effect against free inquiry by fire, the Jesuits aim to accomplish by stratagem and fraud. They adopt a morality which makes the expiation of crime as easy as its commission, not requiring men to forsake it, but only to confess it; thus leaving the fancied pleasure of sin, without its guilt.

But has there not been a change? Has not Rome learned wisdom from the past, and reformed? That her power is weakened, even in her strong holds,—that her throne is trembling, if not already overturned, even in the metropolis of her dark empire, is manifest as the sun at noon. See her fugitive head, cut clean from her shoulders, escaping from the just indignation of a long oppressed people. See a provisional government of their own institution, administering the affairs of the pontifical states, aided

* Spiritual Exercises, P. 291.

by a Chamber of Deputies, a National Guard, and free journals. True, the Inquisition has been abolished in form, but its spirit survives. The Order of Jesuits was annulled by Clement XIV.; but it was restored again in 1814, and has since been weaving dark webs of intrigue and treason, and establishing all over the world, its pestilent dispensaries from which to drug the human mind into ignorance and stupidity, and throw it back into the regions of bigotry and intolerance, from which it has been escaping. The extension of commerce and of international communication, the progress of science, the diffusion of intelligence, and the circulation of the Scriptures, have compelled a modified application of her principles. That there has been no essential change, however, is evident from the present position of Pius IX. Though a fugitive, he dictates, as conditions of his return to the Quirinal, the dissolution of the Chamber of Deputies, the disbanding of the National Guards, and the restoration of the censorship of the press. He holds to the great principles of the hierarchy, the political and ecclesiastical supremacy of the pope, the infallibility of the church, the denial of the right of private judgment, and the abduction of the Bible from the homes and the hearts of the people. The operation of these is, to check inquiry, to repress all free aspirations, and to degrade man in the whole sphere of his humanity. It sets at plain defiance the divine injunction to "search the Scriptures," and shuts men up, for their religion, to the priest, the service-book, and the catechism.

As a spiritual despotism, the Romish hierarchy must stand, constitutionally as it is, or fall by its own weight. So Romanists themselves decided, in the contest with the reformers. Erasmus sought reform, though timidly. Luther and Melanchthon, and their associates sought it more earnestly and boldly. Nor did they break from the church, until their efforts caused her such vexation, that she cast them out as guilty of damnable heresy. Then the crisis had come. The die was cast. They must protest, or do nothing. They did protest against all her idolatry and intolerance. The papal anathema roused the Saxon monk to a pitch of moral heroism, which excited the admiration of one party, and the dread of the other. "You will burn me, for answer to the God's message, which I strive to bring you. I take your bull as a parchment lie, and burn *that*. This is what I do!" And proceeding with it to the east gate of Wittemburg, amidst the

plaudits of congregated beholders, he kindled a fire, whose flames illuminated the whole of the north of Europe, and whose light will shine on to the end of time. It was here that Luther, trusting in the omnipotence of truth, flung defiance at the polished pagan pope, and then gave himself up to God, and to his own destiny. "This thing of yours, which you call a pardon of sin, is a bit of rag-paper with ink. It is nothing else. God alone can pardon sin. I stand here on this, since you drive me to it. And, standing on this, I, a poor German monk, am stronger than you all. I stand solitary and friendless, one man on God's truth. You, with your tiaras, and triple hats, with your treasuries and armories, and thunders spiritual, stand on the devil's lie, and are not so strong."

He is cited to appear at Worms, to say if he will recant. Despite of the earnest remonstrances of his friends, who remind him of the fate of John Huss and Jerome, in whom the truth was smothered and burnt, a century before, the poor miner's son obeys the summons, and Hans Luther stands undismayed at the tribunal of his powerful foes. Behold the world's champion for free thought! The word of God in one hand, and his life in the other, he comes to the conflict. "Confute me by proofs of Scripture, or else by plain, just argument. I cannot recant otherwise. Here I stand. I can do nothing else. God help me!" And God did assist him. His words electrified the nations. The doctors could not answer him, and so they thought to burn him.

Thus it was demonstrated, that free thought and inquiry could not be tolerated in the church of Rome. These tend to reform, by discovering the necessity for it; and reform tends to ruin. The demonstration on a smaller scale, has since been a thousand times repeated. She can dissemble, but not repent. She is becoming decrepid, and the "grasshopper is a burden," and the "keepers of the house tremble, and the strong men bow themselves," and "all the daughters of music are brought low," but she cannot reform. To alter is to destroy. Her pretended supremacy and infallibility are her nature. Hence, her reformers must ever be her assailants, and the projectors of her ruin. Progress, free inquiry within her pale, must move in the road to demolition. Inquiry can only discover her weakness and her wickedness; and yet men will inquire. "This is the rejoicing city that dwelt carelessly; that said in her heart, I am, and there is none besides me. How is she become a desolation, a place for beasts to lie

down in! Every one that passeth by her shall hiss, and wag his head." She has come down through the waste of dark centuries, her "feet slipping in the gore of her innumerable slain, the crosier, the scourge, the brand, and her rusty keys, still clutched in her trembling hands. What she has been, she must be or die, or rather, must be, *and die.*"

Meanwhile, the genius of Liberty, with the lamp of truth in her hand, is approaching her dark domain. The mother of abominations entreats her visiter not to come too near, as the bright light of the lamp is painful to her eyes, and as the region is known to be pervaded with inflammable gases. But Liberty continues to move on; and her lamp shines with increasing brightness, revealing the hidden iniquity of ages.

The scene will soon be changed, and the stage cleared for action. The papacy will soon disrobe herself of her feminine aspect and blandishments; and the brawny "man of sin" will be revealed. He will lay off the tiara, and put on the helmet; let fall the crosier, and grasp the pike; close the service-book, and "ope the purple testament of bleeding war." The great battle of Armageddon is to be fought, truth against error, light against darkness, freedom of inquiry against ignorance, intolerance, bigotry, and persecution. Christ comes into open field against the beast. The beast shall strike at him, but shall beat the air, and fall by the force of his own misdirected blows. He will thrust at free inquiry, but it will be like stabbing the sun.

To the side of truth and freedom will be gathered the faithful and the free from every clime. Even now, the battle rages on the banks of the Danube and the Tiber, in France and the islands of the sea. Tribes, and kindreds, and tongues come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. They are borne on by the "swelling tide of accusations," flowing down from past ages, against the foe. They are cheered on by the voices of the slain witnesses under the altar, saying: "How long, Lord God Almighty, shall we not be avenged?" And their final pean shall be, as in the visions of the seer of Patmos: "Babylon, the great, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and the cage of every unclean and hateful bird." "Therefore shall her plagues come in one day,— death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."

A SACRAMENTAL MEDITATION.

I AM a member of the church, surrounded by my fellow Christians, Christ's table spread before me, himself to preside.

And what is the church? As it appears visibly, it consists of those who profess the true religion, maintain its ordinances, and have entered into covenant with God, and with one another. But are there not tares among the wheat, foolish virgins among the wise? "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God." The real church then contains only those who have the spirit of Christ. A day of separation is coming. "The Son of man shall send his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all that offend and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire." O awful day! In what condition shall I be found? A true disciple who can stand the trial of fire; or a false professor who will be consumed by the breath of his coming? If I am a true disciple, then I love my Saviour supremely, and strive to obey him? I love God's people, because they are godly? I love holiness, and desire to obtain it? If I am a true disciple, I hate iniquity and all the works of the devil; and having been a great sinner, I bear in my bosom a broken and a contrite spirit. Have I these marks of God's children? Can I overcome, when I am judged upon them? Alas, who can tell? Who can understand himself? I hope; but may I not be deceived? O dreadful state, — to think myself well, when I am mortally sick; to profess godliness, when I am a child of the devil; outwardly, and in appearance ascending to heaven, inwardly and really going down to hell. Suppose the worst. Be it that to this hour, I am an impenitent sinner! Is there not mercy enough in Christ even for me? Cannot his blood cleanse from *all* sin? I will cast myself at his blessed feet. "Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me!" I clasp thy cross. I give myself to thee. I renounce sin. Jesus, I trust in thee. I will perish nowhere, but in suppliant attitude, before thee. No! I will not doubt. I love the Lord. I love his people. I love his ordinances. I love his word. He is my supreme delight. Would I not lie down on a martyr's bed

of fire for his sake ? My heart tells me I would ! Yes, I love the Saviour, and he loves me ! He has taken great pains to save me. He is interested in the salvation of lost sinners, and in mine, more by a thousand times, than I can be. No, I will not doubt !

“ ’T is done, the great transaction’s done.

I am my Lord’s, and he is mine ;

He drew me, and I followed on,

Charmed to confess the voice divine.”

Am I then a member of the true church ? And what is the church ? It is the multitude of saints whose robes have been washed in the Lamb’s blood. See how all the boundless plains of heaven are filled with the purest, and mightiest, and most lovely, and most loving spirits, — all happy, all sinless, all bowing in one vast congregation before Christ. These are my brethren, of every generation and clime, who have been redeemed from the earth, and now belong to that great section of the church called “triumphant.” The other portion is still below. They have all been drawn from the horrible pit and the miry clay. They have all been delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of God’s dear son. They are in different countries, of diverse ages, and various circumstances ; — some strong, and some sickly, some in prosperity, and some in sorrow, but they all love and worship Christ. They are his countless flock, and he the great shepherd of the sheep. Opposed by the world, opposed by their sinful natures, mourning over their deficiencies, yet adoring the Son of God, and rejoicing in him, they are all going heavenward. And I am among the number. Dangers surround me, but I shall be preserved ; — battling it with temptations, even though wounded, I shall overcome. In dying, my Saviour will be near. I shall pass through the melancholy flood in his company without terror. With him, I shall enter the city of gold ; and by him be introduced to the Eternal, and worship, with awful delight, that wonderful ONE. I shall become acquainted with many a happy angel, and with the elect of the earth. All my fellow Christians will follow in their turn, and we shall congregate in countless multitudes for his praises, in heaven. This is the church. It comprises the children of God, in contrast with those of the devil. It is the beautiful bride of Christ, his joy, and his crown.

Whence came the church? Its multitudinous members have all been sinful beings. Not one among them, except their glorious Head, was originally holy.

“ Like sheep we went astray,
And broke the fold of God;
Each wandering in a different way,
But all the downward road.”

A poor, senseless prodigal, I forsook my father’s house. I was thoughtless, selfish, corrupt. This was my character, and the character of my race. The justice of a holy God frowned upon me, and the righteousness of his being made my punishment necessary. My sentence was passed. I stood under condemnation. My wretched race was condemned. All the world was guilty before God. Every one carried the elements of a burning hell in his bosom. Think, O my soul, of being an outcast forever; of living in corruption and despair, forever! Once made in the image of God, but then doomed to associate with devils! Oh, what misery! The worm that never dies, the blackness of darkness, a furnace of fire, these are but faint images of the remorse, despair, and agony, which must torment a damned soul. *Whence* came the church? From these loathsome, wretched sinners, transformed, blood-washed, redeemed. Redeemed? Redemption implies purchase. Who bought the church? Jesus Christ. So says the apostle: “Ye are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.” And who is Christ? He is the Son of God. And who is this Son of God? The brightness of the Father’s glory, the partaker of his deity and of his throne,—the wonderful GOD-MAN, from everlasting, yet born in time; Creator, yet created; omnipotent, yet a feeble infant; knowing all things, yet increasing in wisdom like his human brethren; king of the universe, and yet a servant; himself *the life*, yet dying on the cross. Now as God he is saying: I and my Father are one; and he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father. And now as man, he is a distressed captive, in the pains of an awful death, crying out: My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me! Mysterious being!—God-man; in two distinct natures, and one person forever. This is God’s Son. His infinite heart is full of tenderness. He is a man of sorrows; the tears were often on his cheek. He pitied me.

He pitied my race. He determined to save us ; to save us by his own pangs, by the great atonement he would make for our sins in death. See him, that divine Saviour ! Those sharp sorrows, how they pierce his soul ! that bitter grief and anguish, those agonizing prayers, that bloody sweat, O, from what deep compassions they come forth ! I see him seized, arraigned, accused by false witnesses, unjustly condemned, " bound, beaten, spurned, spit upon, stripped, clothed in garments of scorn, blind-folded, buffeted, spit upon again, bound to a pillar, most cruelly scourged, crowned with thorns, and struck with a reed," nailed to the cross, afflicted with insults, torments and injuries. And then those unknown pangs ! that conflict with the evil powers, that mysterious bruising of the soul for human sin ! *Who bears* these infinite miseries ? It is Christ, the God-man, — the same who afterward appeared in glory, on lonely Patmos ; whose voice was then as the sound of many waters, whose countenance was as the sun shining in its strength, and at the sight of whom his beloved disciple fell at his feet as one dead. Who hangs on that cross, hated and hooted at, by maddened sinners of a bloody race ? The same who will judge the world. " Behold he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and all nations shall wail because of him." *He suffered*, this great being, this gentle one, for me. He has redeemed me. I am his friend. I belong to his church. This is his table, spread for my refreshment. He gives me his flesh to eat, and his blood to drink.

And where is Christ ? this grand, this loving, this dying one ? He is *here* ! He never stays away from the communion. He always meets his friends. Listen ! he speaks, he whispers to many. To the wanderer, he says : " Turn ye, and view this great sight ! Behold me, behold me, was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow ? " To the inconsistent and inconstant, shewing his hands and his side, he says : " These are the wounds with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." To the penitential and sin-burdened, he says : " Son, daughter, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." To mourners : " Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my father's house are many mansions." To me, methinks, I hear him say : " Fear not, for I am with thee ; I will be thy God. I will strengthen thee." He is *here*. The house is illumined by his presence,— my soul is gladdened by his coming.

He invites me to his table. Dear Lord, and may I come ? Break, hardened heart. "I must not look on a humbled, broken Christ with an unhumbled, unbroken heart. Come, my soul, sit down by the cross, as a true mourner. Let me weep to see him weep, and bleed to see him bleed," — and love much, because forgiven much ; and love much because he is altogether lovely. Begone, care ! begone, world ! let me talk with him whom my soul loveth. "Draw me, we will run after thee ; the King hath brought me into his chambers ; we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine ; the upright love thee."

I hear him say : " Eat, O friend ; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O, beloved." This is his body. I must eat of it in faith, and after a spiritual manner, lest I eat to my condemnation. And this is his blood, shed for me and for many, for the remission of sin. If I drink, I must be holy, for I cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils. Jesus draws me. "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean ; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." I will take this living food ; and, O thou Son of God, keep me henceforth in the right ways of the Lord. Amen !

NOVEL READING.

IT is estimated that novels and tales compose one sixth of all the present issues from the American press. In France, even previous to the late revolution, the same class of productions was only in the ratio of one sixteenth. Since that revolution, the ratio has sensibly diminished. But neither the Mexican war nor the California enterprise appears to have made any sensible change in the proportions on this side of the Atlantic. Between four and five thousand different novels are now offered for sale in this country. Go to the dépôt or the landing, enter a railroad car or steam-boat, and you may be pretty sure of meeting some itinerant vender of vice in the form of unbound trash. This colportage-system has attained such a degree of industry and impudence as to call for a loud remonstrance. In some quarters the nuisance has been already, in a measure, abated. Still the work goes on ; and by this means, together with the periodical press, circulating library, and other agencies, the land is becoming flooded with novels and

tales, indigenous and imported. Let this evil continue unchecked, and we shall soon have a preponderance of Parisian morals, whose mysteries of iniquity are so widely spread out for inspection and imitation. Bitter fruits, which are only the portentous promise of a whole harvest, already begin to appear. We have, in a previous number, adverted to some of these indications, as seen in the elopement of infatuated misses, and in other forms. The friends of good order and sound morals are extensively awake. Still we do not conceive ourselves at liberty, as yet, to desist from attracting attention to the subject. The authors of these writings, — those filthy dreamers, — and their publishers and venders, deserve reiterated rebuke.

But we do not propose to confine our remarks to the viler specimens of this class of productions. We shall take into our survey a wider department of fiction. Of poetic fiction, in its epic, dramatic, or other forms, we say nothing. So far as unsafe, it is in general, less read and less dangerous than the fiction of prose. It is of romances, novels, and tales, as popularly known, that we speak. And in regard to these it is admitted, discrimination must be made. Those called religious, for instance, are comparatively harmless. As early as the eighth century, John of Damascus composed one which was extensively read. Like others of an early date, it may have been suggested by the Apocryphal books often bound with the Bible; though less valuable even than those books, some of which might also be called religious fictions. To the same class belong the many legends of saints, so extensively read by ecclesiastics of the Romish and other corrupt churches. The influence of these has been very pernicious, because they claim to be veritable histories, and thus give a ten-fold power to their extravagant and puerile contents.

In perfect contrast are some of the novels of modern times, in which the attempt has been made to exhibit the force of religious truths and principles, under the garb of fictitious characters and incidents. Still, with few exceptions, this whole class of writings serves up too many pious dainties; and more usually fosters a religious epicureanism and spiritual chivalry, rather than a vigorous and Scriptural piety.

A modified exception may also be made in favor of some historical novels. Now and then there is one which presents a vivid and tolerably just portraiture of the times in which the scene

is laid ; but the feeling of uncertainty always arises, and with it the question whether the fancy-sketch, however interesting, be as valuable as the less enchanting outline of authentic narrative. It is far easier, no doubt, to draw upon the imagination instead of credible sources of fact, and the result may be proportionably more gratifying to minds that are perverted or ill-informed. Yet there are many obvious and grave considerations, in view of which the judicious must decline being thus pleasurable imposed upon.

Ridicule, it is true, has in some instances been very effectively employed by writers of tales and romances. Cervantes immortalized himself meritoriously in this way. The infatuation of those who penned and perused extravagant fictions was, in his age and the preceding, at its height. This he exposed and arrested ; and thus laid particularly his own country under great obligation. It is not to be denied also, that sometimes from the reading of such works an incidental advantage is derived on the score of taste. In a majority of cases, however, we suppose this to be realized at too great a sacrifice.

Having made these exceptions, we may speak freely of the class of writings now under review ; and we say without qualification, that they tend to fill the mind with false and pernicious notions. Writers of fiction write mainly for amusement. They feel little responsibility for the views and impressions they impart. It would be unreasonable to expect anything else of those whose profession it is to manufacture untruths. Romances and novels uniformly abound in the marvellous and the improbable. The plot is often absurd, and the incidents such as furnish no instruction relative to ordinary life. Those addicted to this species of reading, naturally acquire an inveterate habit of reading only for entertainment. Of course, they will read with little discrimination. They come inevitably to undervalue truth and established principles. They cannot avoid becoming more or less visionary, and moving mentally in an unreal world.

This implies a gross perversion of the judgment. The man of sound judgment forms a due estimate, within his sphere, of the relation of causes to their effects ; and particularly in the affairs of common life, he sees the necessity, and acts upon it, of effort corresponding with the results anticipated. Now this is uniformly the point where fiction is most eminently fiction. The novelist is

unshackled by the necessities of actual history. He can multiply fortunate coincidences to his heart's content. A robber or a pirate, a rich uncle or a mysterious stranger, is always at hand when wanted. In the acquisition of property, accomplishments, esteem, or anything valuable, the common relation of means to their ends are usually, and most unscrupulously, set at defiance. The exceptions in human life are made its laws. Consequently, the reader's inclination to castle-building, which is likely to be strong enough without stimulus, becomes indomitable. Seldom do we find a novel-reader who does not live in an unreasonable expectation of some happy casualty, some fortunate juncture which shall suddenly raise him to ease, wealth, reputation, or whatever may be the special desire of his heart. Such a person will, of course, neglect the appropriate means for securing the wished-for object. He looks for riches without toil. He dreams of affection, which he is incapable of reciprocating. He expects to be admired and loved without the qualities that merit regard, and he is sure to be vexed with the world for not fulfilling his expectations. God has declared: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread;" but romance is an atheistic denial of the justice, and the very fact, of that curse.

One attendant upon this defect of judgment is an ill-regulated and over-active imagination. True, imagination is as much a gift of God as reason. True, it needs to be cultivated. True, also, it may be in some cases, desirably stimulated and guided by works of fiction. "I will tell you," said Milton, "whither my young feet wandered; I betook me among those lofty fables and romances which recount in solemn cantos, the deeds of knighthood." Still it is true, that of all the intellectual powers, this ordinarily needs the least of stimulus, and the most of discipline. It is the meteor faculty, quite unreliable in this "night of time." Its uncontrolled play is the fever of the mind. Now it is such a riot of the fancy, which the greater part of fictions tend directly to stir up. A just view of the vulgar prose of our daily existence they do not present, but are perpetually beguiling with the phantasms of an unreal world. From the indispensable matter-of-fact plodding here on the earth, they carry their readers upward in perilous and profitless balloon excursions. The perusal of such works is an intellectual dram-drinking. The unhappy victims of this mental vice do not live; they dream. Often do they

experience all the *horrors* of a *delirium tremens*; and for these literary, as for other inebrates, there is no hope but in total abstinence.

The affections will also, of course, suffer harm. The majority of fictitious writings foster sentimentalism; and if there be any valueless member of the family or of society, it is the mere sentimentalist, — the person of fine feelings, — exquisitely fine feelings, — who has a profusion of tears, but no heart. Such was Laurence Sterne, who could weep over an expiring ass, yet neglect his dying mother. His counterpart may be often found, and not alone in that sex to which he belonged. Many a delicate, self-torturing, vaporish, female may be met with, abounding, not in alms-deeds, but pathetic sentences.

“ Yes, we have known a high-flown mental thing,
As fine, as fragile as *libella’s* wing,
And soul and intellect, the ethereal mind
Scarcely within its earthly house confined,
On heaven oft casting an enraptured eye,
And paying compliments to the Most High.”

But in that self-same person, — no unusual one, — we have found a soul as void of genuine piety as the nether mill-stone. But to excite and strengthen this puling propensity, there is no means so effectual as novel-reading. In these works of fiction, we find substantially the same endless recurrence of at least two well known characters, who go through a variety of struggles and hardships, and a variety of vain complaints and whimperings. The woful tale calls forth a mighty tide of sympathy; — but what then? Is it a sympathy which leads to effort? Does it inspire the mind with any wise or noble purposes of doing good? No; it begets a dreamy, splenetic habit. The tendency is to debauch and harden. Scarcely any thing can be more disastrous than such an unhealthy stimulus to sympathy, which finds no appropriate expression in active benevolence. It is a vulture at the heart. Let Rousseau illustrate our meaning. Both his character and writings are in point. While yet a youth, it was his frequent practice to spend the entire night in reading romances with his father. Thus was nurtured that sensibility and heartlessness, in which he has few equals. Readily enough could he weep;

“ But his were not the tears of feeling fine,
 Of grief, or love ; at fancy’s flash they flowed,
 Like burning drops from some proud, lonely pine
 By lightning fired ; his heart with passion glowed
 ’Till it consumed his life, and yet he shewed
 A chilling coldness both to friend and foe ;
 As Etna, with its centre an abode
 Of wasting fire, chills with the icy snow
 Of all its desert brow the living world below.”

This sentimentalism may coexist with the most deadly passions ; and lead to acts the most atrocious, as well as fantastic. Madame de Staël relates that in 1811, Monsieur de K. and Madame de V., residents in Berlin, went to an inn at Potsdam, where, after taking some refreshments, and singing hymns, the gentleman, as agreed upon by both parties, shot the lady, and then himself. Madame de V. sent her daughter to the play, the day preceding the suicide. She dressed herself in her most splendid apparel for the occasion. She had written a letter, in which she said, that from the height of heaven, she would continue to watch over her daughter’s welfare ! The preparations for the dreadful act were completed by religious ceremonies. Persons whose minds had not been fearfully perverted by the extravagances of fiction, could never have got up such a diabolical romance in real life, or rather in death. No people on earth are so much given to novel-reading as the Germans ; and nowhere have the effects, in the form of a monstrous sentimentalism become so apparent. A young man of distinction had been crossed in his amours with a person of inferior birth, and their misfortunes made them celebrated. At length his parents, worn out by entreaties, consented to their union. The lovers, however, reflecting that their celebrity would cease with their misfortunes, agreed to meet in a romantic spot, near one of the great roads, and on the banks of one of the principal rivers in Germany ; and there, after collecting flowers to deck their tombs, and erecting a little monument to their own memories, the lover shot his mistress and himself.* The case of Margaret Gottfried, a German woman executed in 1830, is also revoltingly pertinent. She had successively poisoned more than thirty persons ; yet to her last day she liked sentimental emotions, and would at times cry at the recital of poems.†

* Chenevix’s Essay on National Character, Vol. I. P. 170.

† Lüber’s Political Ethics, Vol. II. P. 165.

But if not in this way, still by some other morbid operation, will the reading we speak of tend to enervate the whole character. It is a finical, a falsely fastidious, an unmanly type of character, which these writings contribute to form.

The effeminate and voluptuous Orientals have always discovered great fondness for the extravagant tales with which their literature, secular and sacred, abounds. In the more flourishing periods of Grecian literature, and the better days of Grecian character, romance was unknown. The same was true at Rome. There were manliness and vigor there, during the first six centuries of her history. But a change took place ; and at length, when Crassus was defeated by the Parthians, the victors found copies of the Milesian and Sybarite tales in the tents of the Roman soldiers. Hence the Parthian general could not restrain his contempt for the effeminacy and licentiousness of the vanquished legions, who, even in their distant campaigns, carried these enervating compositions. Of the kings of England, no one perhaps, betrayed more moral weakness, or a greater want of good judgment and general firmness, than Henry III. One clue, at least, to his deficiencies we may find in a revenue-roll, where there is an entry of " Silver clasps and studs for his majesty's great book of romances."

It is well known that Napoleon, in his German campaigns, carried in his camp-library a copy of the Sorrows of Werter, as an index to the debilitated character of that generation of Germans. And there is no doubt but what the novel referred to, with others, contributed effectively to unnerve the minds of more than one nation with whom he contended. In narrower spheres, and in multiplied individual cases, does the same result appear. What other effect than imbecility can be expected upon a mind familiar only with scenes of dalliance and frivolity ? Single books have changed the character of nations ; but what romance now reads bids fair to rouse noble minds, to set on foot important discoveries, or desirable revolutions ?

But independently of intellectual detriment accruing from these works, we protest against them on the ground of their directly immoral and irreligious tendency. It is notorious that a considerable part of the novels now most popular, and of those which were in former years most popular, are grossly deficient in point of morals ; and that very few can be named which do not, on the whole, weaken virtuous and religious prin-

ples. The favorite novelists, with here and there an exception, have pandered most adroitly, and often without a blush, to the very worst of passions. A moral man for a hero, would ruin the tale. Too often is he a wretch deserving a place in the penitentiary or on the gallows ; yet so invested with shining qualities, that he captivates the fancy, and before the reader is aware, has made him by sympathy, a participant in his villanies. How are the finer and better feelings rudely sported with ! How are the darker passions tempted to their ravenous work ! Particularly in regard to the most important of all earthly relations do they mislead and corrupt. Conjugal fidelity, if not directly sneered at, has few charms in the picture of the popular novelist. So in the romances of the chivalrous ages, illegitimacy was an invariable charm. Tragedies in actual life, occasioned by this kind of reading, have already been enacted in our country, which may well make every friend of domestic virtue tremble.

A voice from the seventeenth century enforces what we have offered.* “ As for play-books, and romances, and idle tales, I have already shewed how pernicious they are, especially to youth, and to frothy, empty, idle wits, that know not what a man is, nor what he hath to do in this world. They are powerful baits of the devil, to keep more necessary things out of their minds, and better books out of their hands ; and to poison the mind so much the more dangerously, as they are read with more delight and pleasure ; and to fill the minds of sensual people with such idle fumes and intoxicating fancies, as may divert them from the serious thoughts of their salvation ; and, which is no small loss, to rob them of abundance of that precious time, which was given them for more important business ; and which they will wish, and wish again, at last, that they had spent more wisely. I know the fanatics will say that these things are innocent, and may teach men much good ; but I shall now only ask them, in the presence of God, first, Whether they should spend that time no better ? Secondly, Whether better books and practices would not edify them more ? Thirdly, whether the greatest lovers of romances and plays be the greatest lovers of the Book of God, and of a holy life ? And fourthly, Whether they feel in themselves, that the love of these vanities doth increase their love to the Word of God, and kill their sin, and prepare them for life to come, or clean contrary ? ”

* Baxter's Christian Ethics.

REVIEW.

THEOPHANY, or, the Manifestation of God in the Life, Character and Mission of Jesus Christ. By Rev. Robert Turnbull. Hartford. 1849.

Christianity consists chiefly of facts,—mysterious and supernatural facts, made known to man only through a supernatural revelation. Its claims to belief were at first resisted by brute force and a system of non-intercourse. These obstacles not impeding its progress, philosophy then came in to the aid of the prince of darkness. And as Christ had been “manifested to destroy the works of the devil,” so this spirit was manifested in philosophy to defend itself, and to destroy the works of the Son of man. It has attacked both the facts and the doctrines, or the specific and the general facts, asserted in the Bible to be realities. As the basis of our belief in revelation is the plenary inspiration of the record; and as the basis of the system revealed, is, the union of the divine and human natures in Christ, of course, the satanic philosophy has directed its main attacks against these fundamental positions. The battle having now been protracted through nearly eighteen centuries, it seems to us manifest that the whole armory of the enemy is by this time exhausted. We look with peculiar interest to the controversy as it has for some years been advancing in Germany, because there the human mind has exhausted its powers of research, of criticism and of intuitive philosophy, so far as respects the discovery of new weapons in this war. Every position therefore, gained on that battle field, is one gained forever. We find there three parties: one affirming that Christianity and reason are irreconcilable, and therefore Christianity is not truth; another admitting that all attempts to reconcile their conflicting claims are vain, and yet maintaining that Christianity is true; the third affirming that it is true, and therefore ultimately to be harmonized with all the sound principles of philosophy. This class claim for Christianity, that it is perfect; while philosophy is merely in a certain stage of progress, and therefore not in a state to pronounce upon the higher points of the Christian system.

Their rule is indeed, that which now guides the whole scientific world, and which Paley has, for substance, thus stated: “Intel-

lectual fortitude consists in never permitting what you do know to be shaken by what you do not know." There is sufficient historical evidence that Christ declared himself to be God: and that his friends and foes believed that he made that declaration. The belief of that truth has been one of the most powerful elements in modern history. It has existed, and wrought, during eighteen hundred years. It has not merely survived many changes, as Islamism has, and as many corrupt forms of Christianity have; it has also been seen in the foreground of all the modern forms of civilization. It is found in harmony with the progress of society, conflicting with nothing but human unbelief. We therefore look to the German controversies with intense interest. The battles in England and New England are now mere skirmishes. Imported German weapons, and generally those that have already become antiquated at home, are all that we have yet seen employed on the Arian and Socinian side of this great question here. It is, then, from the history of the German controversy, that we take encouragement. Because that has been the most profound, and most completely exhaustive; and there the main principles which lie at the foundation of all the philosophical objections, are themselves now brought in question at the bar of reason. The precipitancy, the shallowness, and the arrogance of the sceptical assumptions have been there demonstrated in the fullest manner.

In what precise form the great foundation fact of Christianity is ultimately to be stated, so that it shall find no barrier in the understanding of what the Bible calls "the natural man," or, the man under the control of the natural, and beyond the sphere of the supernatural, we are unable to say. Indeed, we do not know but "the builders" are ever to reject this corner-stone; and that the history of this doctrine is ever going to prove, that "if any man will do God's will, he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God." In other words, it is by no means certain to us, that the wickedness of the heart in some of its forms, does not necessarily repel this doctrine; by which we do not at all mean to affirm, however, that its reception is a necessary proof of a holy heart. Yet we must confess we look with solicitude upon every form of speculation that does not rigidly adhere to the written Word; but adopts as its ultimate decision on this mysterious doctrine, any view that omits any important class of passages

referring to it. The main points of this subject, which we regard the Scriptures as teaching, are the unity of the God-head ; the distinction of persons, which lays the foundation for three to be one ; the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, being three as such, one as God ; the Father was not incarnate, but the Son was ; the being Christ Jesus is both God and man, "in two distinct natures and one person forever," as the catechism well expresses it. When, therefore, the manifestation of the Godhead in Christ is compared with its manifestations in nature ; and this comparison is made in order to remove the difficulties of the incarnation, we must regard it as betraying the essential element of the doctrine. The difference is so wide, that if any other being than the man Christ Jesus, it matters not how fully God is manifested in him, should receive the worship, homage, love, and confidence which he receives, it would be idolatry ; if any other being had assumed the place of man and died for him, there would have been no atoning efficacy in his sufferings and death ; nor would any other manifestation of the Deity justify the substitution of the expression : "God was made Gabriel, or angel, or nature, or Paul," for that now employed by the Scriptures : "The Word was made, or became, flesh."

If it be asked, Whether no concessions are to be made to candid scruples, or to an age of advanced illumination ? our reply is ; We take for ourselves and the world, a whole revelation, or none. The Bible is God's word, or an unmixed imposture. If God has taught us, we must learn, not teach, in his school. Every question in theology is, in fact, a question of interpretation. "To the law and to the testimony." "But are you not affected by the remonstrance of the enlightened reason of man against the intrinsic and essential absurdity of the Trinity and the Incarnation ?" As to the absurdity we reply, in words attributed to one in whom common sense seems to be uncommonly developed : " You and I may not understand the arithmetic of heaven." As to the opposition of reason, we find nothing very frightful in it ; because it has no unity, no certainty, no oracle. On the contrary, there is not a dogma in any one school of rationalists that somebody has not opposed. Reason has been as strongly developed in those who receive, as in those who reject, this doctrine. We have never seen the special claim of the rationalists to soundness of reason, substantiated. When we see that all the great battles of Chris-

tianity have been fought by men who believed this doctrine ; that her territories have been enlarged by their exertions ; that her struggles with paganism, her self-denying, charitable labors have been performed almost, if not altogether, exclusively by them ; and when we see, that the Arian and Socinian labors are always performed when the period of literary ease and worldly honor has succeeded to the din of battle, and the period of worldly sacrifices incidental to the introduction of Christianity, we cannot find ourselves strongly impelled to do much reverence to rationalism. So far as we know its history, it is a parasitic plant, waiting for the full growth of the oak, that it may start up, with soft envelope to gird the old trunk, take on the majesty of its form, smooth the ruggedness of its surface, and pass for the tree, but really to absorb its vital juices. So far as we know its history, it is negative, destructive, and finally, self-destructive ; never refusing with Paul, to " boast in another man's line of things, made ready to its hand," but always ready to destroy the very peculiarities of the Christian system, while enjoying the rich incidental benefits which that system has conferred on them who now resist it, as it did on their fathers. Of course, their reason looks on the matter in a totally different light. But so long as our reason contemplates it thus, we cannot find ourselves very profoundly moved to accommodate Christianity and her infallible record to this self-styled enlightened reason.

We call upon the record of reason to shew what she has done for man in his acknowledged urgent necessities. What has she done in the East, and in the ancient days ? Two antagonist gods,—Incarnation that annihilates human nature, and Fatalism,—these are her highest achievements. What in Greece, where her power culminated and reached its apex in Plato. Did it bring an almighty helper to man in his conscious weakness, guilt, depravity, and ruin ? No ; we find nowhere, in all her annals, the description of any thing positive, any thing satisfactory. We cannot find that pagan or Christian philosophers have introduced one element of real, spiritual power to elevate the degraded, to console the wretched, to reunite man to God, and man to man. We indeed turn to ask of the rationalist, if he will account for it that the special power of Christianity is always confined to the ages and the people who seize upon this precise feature of it ; and we challenge him to bring his missionary history, his record of revivals and

reformations, his history of new ground broken; of vicious districts reclaimed; of hearers "pricked in the heart," crying: "Men and brethren, what must we do to be saved?" of people "taking joyfully the spoiling of their gods," for the sake of a good man who had gone to the gibbet for them. It may be in our ignorance that we make such appeals; and it may be but furnishing a brilliant opportunity for bringing forth what will speak more for rationalism, human reason, and its theology, than all we have ever yet seen or heard in it, or about it.

We deemed it necessary thus to speak for ourselves, while introducing Mr. Turnbull, already so favorably known for his valuable contributions to our literature. He has here done a good work, because he has stated, and ably defended, the essential positions of this great doctrine. But the aim of his work being popular instruction, rather than thorough discussion, one can scarcely consent to merely echo his valuable sayings, without adding something by way of independent testimony.

This work is timely; bringing to view clearly and faithfully this vital element of the Christian system; discussing it in a conciliatory spirit, and yet, without any compromise. The style of Mr. Turnbull is more than agreeable, uniformly; and frequently rises into strains of great beauty and grandeur. He will not expect us to endorse his interpretation of the passages in Romans and Colossians, concerning our burial with Christ in baptism. We know they are cardinal texts with our brethren who make immersion essential to baptism. But we think their hinge must be broken under the blows of a thorough criticism. And he will suffer us, while in the vein of minute criticism, to suggest that he has asserted, on page 126, just what he meant to deny. His language is: "That *one* is not *three*, nor *three one*, in every possible sense, especially in a common, obvious, and, above all, arithmetical or mathematical sense, no man who reveres the word of God, can admit." Did he not mean to say "deny" instead of "admit"? And we would suggest, moreover, that some proof should be offered to sustain the remark, that the primary idea of the English word *atonement* is that of *expiation*, or *satisfaction*.

We were looking through the work, for some reference to recent handlings of this great theme in our own neighborhood, and supposed we found them here:

"Others, again, admit that the sufferings of Christ are vicarious and substitutionary, but only in appearance and form; that the atonement is a manifestation of the Divine love issuing in the transformation of the sinner, but not, as we contend, a sacrifice for sin.* They find, indeed, a sacrificial or expiatory character in the mere outward form, or, what has been called the *liturgical* aspect of the doctrine; but what is this, when separated from its reality or essence? The atonement is either an *expiation*, or *not*. If an expiation or a sacrifice for sin, it is such in its very nature and essence, not simply in its outward form or figurative representation. The form or liturgy, that is, the ritual and outward representation of a doctrine, to be good for anything, must correspond with its inward spirit. Otherwise the form deceives us! If the atonement or expiation is only in the words, or in the ritual, figurative aspect of the doctrine, not in the doctrine itself, it is *nothing*,—at least nothing tangible. The whole thing is a play upon words, and leaves the matter precisely where it was."

The work contains two parts. In the first, the life of Christ is described in a very interesting manner; and in the second, the character and mission of Christ. We give one fair specimen of Mr. Turnbull's book. On the relations of the Godhead to the sufferings of Christ, he has taken the position generally rejected by theologians; but recently defended with ability, in an anonymous work, published in New York.

We give the following specimen of Mr. Turnbull's book:

"But let God reveal himself in a nature like our own, and in that nature go forth to control all worlds, to quicken the dead, to regenerate the soul, and instantly we gain a conception of his majesty which overwhelms us. Let us behold him in the face of Jesus, radiant with the light of a boundless, unutterable love, and both our intellect and our heart humble themselves before the adorable mystery. Here is a Being we can understand and appreciate, moving and acting among ourselves, full of majesty and power, controlling the winds and the waves, healing the sick, raising the dead, regulating the world of spirits, overmastering the powers of evil, conquering death and the grave, and fully assuming the place of eternal and universal dominion. And yet, with all this power and supremacy, full of mercy and good fruits, infinite in love and compassion, blessing all, saving all; a man, with the heart and soul of a man, yet a God confessed, with all the might and majesty of a God; so that in gazing upon his glorified face, through which the whole Deity is shining, we exclaim, with an ancient prophet: 'This God is my God, I have waited for him; this God is my God, I will be glad, and rejoice in his salvation.' "

* " This is the view of Schleiermacher and some of the German theologians. It is also the view of Coleridge and his followers."

REVIEW.

REMARKS ON THE PAST, AND ITS LEGACIES TO AMERICAN SOCIETY. "Westward the Star of Empire takes its way." By J. D. Nourse, Louisville, Ky. 1849.

MR. NOURSE, formerly a member of the Kentucky bar, has here written a very sensible book, on a very important subject. The title and the style we should be disposed to amend. The latter can hardly escape the charge of turgidness; and the excess of italicized words is painful to the eye. The scope of the work is, to mark the rise and progress of the several elements of modern civilization; which is done with more than ordinary ability.

But we could hardly maintain our theological integrity, did we suffer to pass unnoticed the following remark. He says: "There is no substantial distinction, such, at least, as the human mind is capable of apprehending, between the doctrine of Arius, and that of the Nicene Council." That Arius did not follow out his principles to their legitimate results, in regard to all other doctrines depending on that of the person of Christ, we can concede. But we cannot admit that his views do not involve a fundamental difference, by logical necessity, between Arianism and the gospel, in its most vital doctrines. And even that Arius and the Council of Nice did not differ on a point vital to the gospel, and comprehensible by ordinary minds too, we know not how so intelligent and fair a writer can assert. The language of Arius is: "The son (of God) is not unbegotten, nor a portion of the unbegotten, in any manner." "The Son had a beginning, but God was without a beginning. He is not a portion of God." He does indeed qualify all this; but it is in such a way as to make really two Gods; "for, he (the son) was *never* unbegotten." Thus Arius would make two eternal existences, of different natures. This is heaven-wide from the Nicene creed, in its amplitude of discrimination and declaration, which says: "We believe in the Son of God," — "of the substance of the Father," — "of the same substance with the Father." Surely this is the difference between either God and a creature; or, one God and two Gods. It is a distinction so "substantial," as to be easily apprehended by the human mind.

Among the prominent wants of this country, is an enlightened regard for the past. And we are cheered by this additional evidence that history is going to become a study in this republic; and that the love of it has taken root on the banks of the Ohio. High churchmen, infidels, and tory historians have retarded this noble study, by insisting on the authority of tradition; and holding up the past as containing the glorious days of perfect kings, and happy ignorance. They have forced the friends of freedom to turn away the public mind from the past, and fill it with hopes of the future. But this is an extreme, from which we must return. And it is wonderful that the idolaters who worshipped every image, but those of Freedom and true Heroism, should have permitted so many documents to remain unburned, which are now changing the whole character of history. What an unveiling of sainted tyrants within twenty years; what a reversal of Jacobin verdicts! History is now becoming a potent auxiliary of every noble sentiment, every right principle; the indispensable weapon in every battle for truth and freedom. It seems to us to be almost as impossible that Providence should suffer all its own acts for the last thousand years to perish out of the human memory, as that it should suffer the Bible to perish. Without the records of science, men would always remain children in the arts. And without the records of Providence, men must remain children in all the great arts of government and social life. The history of the arts is naturally preserved by their monuments, and by the constant demands made by the lower wants of life.

But the history of mind, men, and principles, the most important of all, easily fades from the memory. The more effort consequently is needed to preserve it, and to keep it before the minds of men.

It gives us the more pleasure to notice this work by Mr. Nourse, because it is native and Western; and especially because it is not likely, from the modesty of the author, and the remoteness of its birth-place, to receive due attention from the Eastern public.

His work consists of four parts,—The Cross,—Night and Morning,—Spiritual Despotism and the Reformation,—The Anglo-Normans, or Law and Liberty. Its scope is to trace, somewhat after the manner of M. Guizot, the rise, progress, and transmission of the main elements of modern civilization. It

presents a very just picture of the growth of the human mind, considered as one ; and of human institutions, regarded as its outer integuments.

The Cross embraces the whole of revealed religion, because that is its moral centre. "I say nothing," he remarks, "of the doctrines of Christianity. It is not my province. But the divinity of Christ, his life and death, and the purport of both, are not mere dogmas ; they are facts or they are fables. If it be true that the Divine Word has descended from heaven, clothed himself in human nature, became the second representative of the human family, and quenched in his own blood the flaming sword of inexorable law ; if he has gone before us as our elder brother through shame, and poverty, and sorrow, and death, to be crowned the conqueror of our last enemy, and ascend on high, leading captivity captive, it is plain that here are facts, in comparison with which all other facts are insignificant. In comparison with this glorious embodiment of the poetry of religion, what are all the speculations of philosophy, what are all the cold calculations of prudential morality ! On these facts, as an eloquent writer has observed, the world may be said to have had its foundation for nearly two thousand years, and in them we must look for the chief source of the peculiar glories and advantages of the Christian civilization. Surely it is worth while for every man to give these facts an earnest and impartial examination. If the gospel history be even substantially true, it is infinitely the most important part of history ; properly the central, and loftiest point, from which all history should be looked at."

Night and Morning exhibits the wonderful phases of the Christian era, in which he finds gradually developed several grand elements. The first is liberty. "The Roman empire had done its allotted work, in laying a deep and broad foundation for the Christian civilization ; and now the deadening unity of an absolute despotism was to give place to tumultuous life, to spontaneity, to liberty." This of course, he traces to the German tribes. Religion then conquers the barbarians, after they have conquered Christian Rome. Monachism has its place and its part to act. The Cities and their Bishops come next in order. Then the Arabs, Feudalism ; Chivalry, which he calls "the martial enthusiasm of the terrible warriors of Germany, refined by the poetry of the Arabs, and exalted by the great moral ideas derived from

Christianity ;” Woman, as emancipated and elevated by Christianity, the Crusades ; Commerce ; Poetry ; Language ; the Universities ; Scholasticism ; these are the great powers and instruments, by which Providence prepared the world for the next era. We coincide totally with Mr. Nourse in his judgment, contrary to the opinion of M. Guizot that woman owes her present elevation to feudalism. The power which wrought this great social change, he well observes, “ was the unobtrusive agency of the Christian religion.”

In the next department of his work, entitled *Spiritual Despotism and the Reformation*, Mr. Nourse makes the most candid concessions to the papacy of the early and middle ages. To qualify his concessions, as we might desire to do, would carry us too far at this time. He has said the best things for the best of the pontiffs that the case admits. “ The spirit of the papal policy was originally great and magnanimous. That intentionally or unintentionally it did much in those early ages for the cause of civilization, will not be denied.” No, we would add, it cannot be denied. And all protestant as we are, it gladdens us when we can light upon a verdant spot in the desert of that wilderness, the history of the popes. “ But,” he adds, “ the possessors of absolute power are apt to forget the purposes for which it was acquired.” Aye ! and sure, as well as apt. He regards the Reformation as ceasing to be a moral power as soon as it becomes political in its spirit and measures. The Roman church, he admits, once countenanced freedom of inquiry ; but now dreads it as her most formidable foe. And “ whether Protestantism admits of a conservative form, which can unite moral power with freedom of opinion,” he regards as “ one of the great problems of the age.”

The fourth article, entitled ; *the Anglo-Normans, or Law and Liberty*, is altogether the most original and compact portion of the work. It exhibits the great result of English history for the last three centuries to be, the establishing of popular rights. “ It was in England that the two great antagonists of modern society first fairly confronted each other, and the first effective blows were struck in that battle between power and liberty, not yet ended, of which the English, the American and the French revolutions have been the most terrible and bloody encounters.” The author appears not to see with M. Guizot’s optics, in regard

to the superiority of French civilization. The contest between France and England has been during a long period, not only for political supremacy, but also "for the foremost place in the civilization of mankind." Our author awards the palm to the Anglo-Normans ; of whom he says, they are everywhere "the torch-bearers of religion, science, liberty. Each Christian nation has had a share in the providential education of mankind." — "The English," he adds, "have excelled in everything that requires good sense and practical sagacity ; but, if I mistake not, the great mission of the Anglo-Saxons is, to solve this highest problem of political philosophy ; *the reconciliation of order and liberty.*"

The conclusion of the discussion is thus reached : "American society, then, may be regarded as the net product of the whole past, eliminated from those terms, which, though useful in working out the problem, must be cancelled to obtain the result." — "Our constitution was a compromise, not only between slave-holding and non-slave-holding societies, between centralization and state-rights, but also between progress and conservatism. The American statesmen did not, like the French Jacobins, aspire to build a political edifice out of flimsy abstractions. They did not attempt to create, but merely to construct, with material ready to their hands. With principles as old as Magna Charta, institutions to which the people had long been accustomed, and the new quality growing out of the peculiar circumstances of American society, they went to work in a spirit of compromise, and constituted a glorious temple of constitutional liberty."

We take our leave of a very intelligent and entertaining companion, when we have heard his closing words of exhortation to his countrymen ; "Here civilization may attain its most glorious triumphs, if we give to genius, wisdom and learning their due regard, if we place virtue and intelligence above wealth and office ; if we preserve that only true liberty which is consistent with a lofty morality, with wholesome laws, with justice to all and each ; if we look back upon the mighty past, not with self-complacent contempt, but with that discriminating veneration which may take warning from its errors, and emulate its greatness ; if last, though not least, we cling to that most precious of all its legacies, of which the cross is the seal, and the Bible is the record, duly attested by the providence of God."

OBSERVATIONS ON MEN, BOOKS, AND THINGS.

PRAYER-MEETINGS.—All intense emotions burn to impart themselves. To be in sympathy with such as are like-minded, is necessary to human happiness. No man can keep all to himself that which occupies his whole soul. Be it a secret of love or murder, it must come out. And this is true especially of the religious sentiment, the most powerful of all the passions man can feel. There is a craving for communion with God, and with men who are like God, bearing his image and breathing his spirit. Necessity is laid upon them;—they must assemble themselves together, that they may feel themselves in a congenial atmosphere. And not only must they give vent to their pent-up emotions in the prayers, and praises, and privileges of the great congregation; but they must impart their sentiments still more freely in the less formal and restrained meeting for Christian conference. This is the origin of prayer-meetings.—This view is sustained by facts. Take that oldest and best of all ecclesiastical histories, the Acts of the Apostles; and see how, from the beginning, the disciples were wont to meet in upper chambers, coming together “all with one accord in one place,” to call unitedly upon the name of the Lord. And ever since that time, in all places where there has been any spiritual life and activity, there social meetings for prayer have been frequent. Perhaps no scenes can be more tedious and tasteless to the man of the world; but the sincere disciple finds in them the sweetest and purest happiness, and there drinks with joy from the river of God’s pleasures. Thus it was in the earliest days of New England. Mather tells us, in his *Magnalia*, published in 1702, that “in the beginning of the country, devout Christians had their private meetings, wherein they would seek the face, and sing the praise of God, and *confer* upon some questions of practical religion for their mutual edification; *and the country is still full of these little meetings.*” At this day, the country is more full of these “conference” seasons than ever. And though they are far from being so fully attended as were to be wished, yet we do not hesitate to say that we do not believe that there is an orthodox church anywhere in New England, however small or scattered, but feels that at least one such stated meeting from week to week, and from year to year, is indispensable to its religious comfort, and even to its existence.

If now there are large denominations among us, which have no such general system of prayer and conference-meetings, kept up by the constant sense of spiritual necessities; or which, when a measure of the kind is adopted, sees it thronged as a curious novelty, while all the country around is laid under contribution for the more devout ministers and laymen to sustain the interest of the occasion, and even the secular prints give regular reports of the exercises;—if there be such denominations, ought not either fact to suggest to them the most solemn reflections? In all kindness, we would ask, What ought they to think of their own spiritual state, and of the scheme of doctrines by which that state is produced?

MARGARET SMITH'S JOURNAL.—Here is a volume, purporting to be a portion of the diary of a young lady, who visited several places in the Province of Massachusetts Bay in 1678—9. Though liable to many minor criticisms, this little fiction is written with abundance of talent, and contains many pleasing passages. But it is from the pen of one in whom the antiquated Quaker grudge rankles in all its acridness, under a doublet of the smoothest and neatest drab, a beaver of the broadest brim, and a visage expressive only of the blandest benevolence. Coleridge has well compared the "Friends" to a volcano in a mountain of ice. No other men ever had such a godly way of doing an ungodly thing! The writer before us paints most of the old Puritans in this land as a set of persecuting demons, while the cunning followers of old Fox are delineated as angels of mercy and goodness. It is very unfortunate for the memory of our fathers, that they despised the Quaker invectives of their day, too much to answer their railing pamphlets. These pamphlets teem with atrocious slanders against our ancient ministers and magistrates, which those worthies regarded as too absurd for belief, and too contemptible to call for refutation. Hence, for the most part, but one side of the story has reached us. The slanders remain, written as they were under the promptings of exasperated prejudice and bitter disappointment. The Puritan version of the story, with slight exceptions, has not fully come down to us. And now the frantic effusions of the Quakers, which in their time were deemed unworthy of notice, are exhumed from lumber-lofts and antiquarian dust-heaps, and quoted by Bancroft, and some who pretend to write history, as documents of unquestionable authority. No doubt but the Quakers, in the excitement they produced by their senseless and outrageous proceedings, suffered, in some instances, unjustly; but, usually, they were punished for such breaches of the public peace and order, as are at this day chastised by the laws of our commonwealth, and which the present generation of Quakers would condemn as decidedly as our fathers did. When George Fox accused our fathers of persecution in punishing those who disturbed public worship, insulted courts of justice while in session, and even perambulated the streets in a state of nudity, our ancestors did not feel themselves called to repel such an accusation. Roger Williams, indeed, in his book called "George Fox digged out of his Burrows," volunteers to vindicate "the people of the Bay" from that accusation; and surely *he* is an unexceptionable witness in their favor, on a point like this, where he could have no extreme partiality for their side.

DR. DE WETTE.—This divine was banished from Prussia, many years since, on account of his radicalism in politics and his neologism in polemics. He has since resided in Switzerland, as a professor in the University of Basle. He is regarded as one of the most distinguished of living scholars, in the departments of sacred antiquities, and of the philology of either Testament. The readers of that invaluable work, the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, must have noticed with interest a translation from De Wette's Commentary on a part of the fifth chapter of Romans, made by Professor Stuart, and published in

May, 1848. By a thorough interpretation of this much-contested passage, De Wette derives from it the doctrine of *original sin*, in its Old-Lutheran form of *inherited sin*, or "the original likeness of all men, by virtue of which the sin of Adam becomes common to all, and sin propagated or inherited is still the free act of every man."

The following passage, we translate from the Preface to the last part of his New Testament Manual, being a condensed exposition of the Apocalypse, and dated June 20th, 1848. It is very remarkable as coming from one who has long been exiled as a dangerous radical, and a secret foe of religion. It would indicate a strong reaction, as he grows older and wiser, toward sound and salutary principles. As to his remark that the predictions in the Apocalypse do not reach down to the present day, we would only suggest, that though that wonderful book may not reflect a special distinct picture of the present state of German Protestantism, yet even this is certainly comprehended among the last transformations of the Church; and "the prophetic vision of John" discerns, beyond the disorders of our times, the final victory of the Church. Here is the passage:

"I began this work amid the arming for the civil war in Switzerland, and pursued it uninterruptedly when the throne of France fell, and while the thrones of Germany were tottering; and I finished it while anarchy was extending itself, and black thunder-clouds arose over the people. I thank God for the peace of mind he granted me; but thoughts of the destiny that awaited us, and probably the Church also, accompanied almost every line I penned. I could not refrain from descrying, in this our time, the antichrist depicted by John, although in altered shape, and in yet darker features. The self-deification of the Romish antichrist appears to me like child's play, as compared with the God-denying, unbelieving, supercilious, all-unbridled, *egoism* of our day. And what is a corporeal persecution of the Christian faith with fire and sword, compared with the dissolute Young-Hegel dialectics, or in comparison with the flatteries and foolings of the so-called love of freedom, which springs from the vilest internal slavery, and leads the poor people into inward and outward servitude? According to the counsel of those who claim to take the lead of public sentiment, the State should cast off the Christian principle, and establish itself on the ground of Indifferentism, if not of absolute Atheism. What a stride toward a new and unexampled barbarism! For in the American Union, where the State takes a similar stand, the statesmen at least are Christians, and for the most part zealous Christians.

"In my labors upon the Apocalypse, I have not learned how to prophesy; and the prophetic vision of John reached not down to our times. Hence I know not what the destiny of our beloved Protestant Churches will be. Only this I know, that in no other name is there salvation, but in the name of Jesus Christ, the Crucified; — and that there is nothing higher for human kind, than the Godmanhood realized in him, and the kingdom of heaven planted by him; — an idea and a problem, which have never yet been rightly recognized and brought to life, not even by those who may be properly regarded as the warmest and most zealous Christians. If Christ were in deed

and truth our Life, how could such a desertion of him be possible? Those in whom he lives, would, throughout their whole life, in word, writ, and act, testify for him so powerfully, that unbelief must be struck dumb."

THE HISTORIES OF TACITUS. — This second volume of the surviving works of the sagacious Roman, is edited, like the former, by Professor Tyler, of Amherst College. In giving the highest commendations to this work, we speak not at random. That famous reviewer, Rev. Sydney Smith, facetiously remarks, that it is very desirable that the critic should never read the books he notices, because this might destroy his impartiality! We have lost this means of forming an unbiassed judgment, not having "read the book by the fingers," as the phrase is; but having deliberately eyed every word, except the index and the large advertising pamphlet which the booksellers have, very unsuitably, bound up with the volume. Even this last appendix we might have glanced at, if the publishers had not so often favored us with the sight of it in the same exceptionable way. It has ceased to have the charm of novelty. — As to Caius Cornelius Tacitus, he has long been regarded as the father of philosophical history. He is no mechanical annalist, whose tasteless toil consists in binding up his fagots of dry facts, and piling them up in heaps just fit for the baker's oven. His truly historic spirit penetrates to the motives of men, and the hidden causes of events; and his style, so condensed and pregnant, renders him at once one of the most difficult and the most instructive of the Latin classics. No writer more needs a keen commentator, or better deserves one. And the "manes" of the old Roman ought to be very much obliged to the Amherst professor, for furnishing him with such invaluable means for a higher appreciation of him by posterity. We cannot but sigh over the lost books of The Histories of Tacitus, of which what now remains to us breaks off at that most interesting period of ancient history, the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. How precious would be the account of that unparalleled tragedy, given in the concise descriptions of "that historian, who," as Montesquieu says, "abridged every thing, because he saw every thing." Let us not despair of yet recovering this treasure. The Roman emperor Tacitus, supposed to be a descendant of the historian, and who flourished nearly two centuries after him, had copies of his writings placed in all the libraries of the empire, and required the scribes to make ten copies every year. Time, in devouring these copies, has done himself great injustice. The most complete manuscript known to be in existence, was found in a Westphalian monastery, long ago. Perhaps other convents may, ere long, be broken up; and, among their concealed spoils, these, and other missing treasures of antiquity, may be brought to light. — We cannot conceive of a more thorough and strengthening discipline of the mind, in training it to hard thinking and concise speaking, than the careful perusal of Tacitus. This is the grand benefit of classical study, which, for such a purpose, is far superior to mathematical research.

EMBARKATION OF MESSRS. JUDSON AND NEWELL, A. D., 1812.

— This was one of the most important events in the history of modern American missions. Dr. Judson, who was sent forth as a Congregationalist, still survives, in high esteem with the Baptist churches, to which he has long been attached. During his recent visit to this country, he made, as we learn by the highest authority among the Baptists, certain statements very derogatory to the Christian zeal and affections of Rev. Dr. Worcester, of Salem, the first Secretary of the A. B. C. F. M., and the other early friends of the missionary cause in that region. These statements having been widely circulated, at last appeared in a more definite shape in the Christian Review, a Baptist Quarterly, published in this city. The editor of that work, in a very commendable spirit of fairness and justice, has inserted in the March number an overwhelming reply by the son of Dr. Worcester, and his successor in the ministry at Salem. We rejoice in this thorough and timely vindication of a body of men as holy, courageous, and self-denying as have ever been enrolled under the missionary standard. The promise still holds good to Zion: "Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children." The statements imputed to Dr. Judson by his admirers are utterly false as to matters of fact which he must have fully known. We can only hope, in all charity, that he was wholly misunderstood or misrepresented by those who have undertaken to report his assertions; or else that his memory of those distant transactions is sadly confused and inaccurate. If he could knowingly and wilfully, as well as thanklessly and falsely, cast such odium upon the sainted dead, (which, as yet, we are altogether unwilling to believe,) he is certainly the last man who could be trusted to give to the heathen a faithful translation of the Book of Truth.

ROGER WILLIAMS. — The article in our last number, on this famous man, has drawn forth another grievous comment from our esteemed brethren of the Christian Watchman. That comment, like all attempts of able men to maintain a bad cause, is made up of furtive evasions of the points at issue, and *cutting* remarks adapted to discourage us from pursuing the subject any further. This sort of proceeding reminds us of the Chinese burglars, who braid pieces of broken glass into their long cues, so that when chased by the policeman, they may not be seized by that very inviting, but dangerous appendage. Nevertheless, we shall be after our fugitive friends, and try to hold them by some other handle to the stubborn facts of the case. We had said, that, among other groundless claims which his admirers had set up in favor of Williams, was that of being the first who wrote in behalf of liberty of conscience. To prove that this claim is not set up, the Watchman quotes a stray sermon printed at Providence ten years ago. Yet that very sermon expressly and handsomely confutes certain eulogists of Williams, for making this very claim in his behalf! By this singular self-contradiction, the Watchman is condemned out of its own mouth. — The editors of that paper wisely take no notice of the passage we cited from John Quincy Adams, in which that champion of liberality and freedom vindicates

our fathers for banishing Williams as a "nuisance." But by way of off-set to this, we have two flourishes of rhetoric, of the stereotype stamp, which escaped from the flowing pens of Judge Story and Mr. Bancroft.

Our keen friends of the Watchman seem to think that we, their brethren of the Observatory, are far behind the Providence patriarch in our ideas of toleration. This is really cruel upon us, for we honestly think that we have made considerable advance upon his position. In his strange book with the punning title, "George Fox digg'd out of his Burrowes," Williams severely censures the Quakers for their want of "civil respect." He is particularly shocked at their familiar use of "thee" and "thou," in addressing their superiors. He says : "*I have therefore publickly declared my self, that a due and moderate restraint and punishing of these incivilities (though pretending Conscience,) is as far from persecution, (properly so called,) as that it is a Duty and Command of God unto all mankinde, first in Families, and thence unto all mankinde Societies.*" Page 200. Oh Roger, Roger ! Is this thine absolute "soul-liberty," — "due and moderate restraint and punishing" of thy poor Quaker friends, who conscientiously used *thee* and *thou*, in an age when *thee* and *thou* were vastly more common than now ? What wouldest thou have done to them for their greater peccadilloes, had the power been given thee ? — The Watchman discreetly passes by the fact we alleged, that Williams's colony refused its franchise to Roman Catholics, while the papist colony at Maryland were admitting Baptists and Quakers to that privilege. No marvel that, in the big quarto which George Fox and some of his subalterns wrote against Williams, entitled "A New England Fire-Brand Quenched," Williams is railed at many scores of times for being as "vile a persecutor" as any of the Puritan magistrates of Massachusetts. They accuse him of a "bloodthirsty spirit," and of "an impious spirit that seeks to murther the innocent." "Oh, murtherous man," say they, "that hath not any remorse for thy long-lived wickedness!" The Quakers fairly buried their supposed benefactor under piles of abuse, after they had poisoned his old age by ceaseless wrongs and insults.

Our opinion of him is, that he was a sincerely good man, so far as a "Come-outer" could be, whom it is the modern fashion to praise extravagantly for what he did, and still more for what he never thought of doing. We have no objection, however, to our Baptist brethren's admiring him to their heart's content, if they would not claim for him a superiority to the Puritans, which, on the whole, is historically false ; and if they would not make sectarian capital out of his factitious celebrity. Their best men know that he forsook the Baptists in three months after his immersion, and never communed with them, and rarely, if ever, worshipped with them ; and for the last forty years of his life, denied that they had any true churches, ministers, or sacraments. Their convert does them little honor. If he were now living, they would surely banish him from their sect, if not from their commonwealth. He did not think half so well of them as we do.

MONTHLY RECORD.

The Independent.—This new paper of the Congregationalists at New York is sustained with much ability, and, we trust, with increasing success. We notice some remarks in a late number on dignity and courteousness of language in speaking of others ;—with a slight hint to the former Editor of the Observatory. We infer that such forms of speech as the Liberator, and, formerly, the Emancipator, for example, have sanctioned, will never be allowed in that print. Indeed, its corps of Editors contains one, who, from his peculiar experience, affords the hope that the paper will never fall to the level of ordinary newspapers in this respect.

Death of Miss Mary Lyon.—Few events of this nature could awaken so much emotion through a large community as the departure of this servant of God. Her whole life was religiously tuned, but made the sweetest music at the close. With no adventitious aids from birth and connections, with no graces of person, speech, or pen ; but with a strong and energetic mind entirely given up to one grand object, she has been a most useful instrument of the gracious purposes of God. She was one of the peculiar products of Christianity. No other religion has produced a character in the slightest degree resembling hers ; and even Christianity has produced but few to compare with her. She was devoted to the religious education of her sex, thousands of whom rise up to call her blessed.

Licences in Boston.—The aldermen of this city deserve a reputation entirely distinct from that which has heretofore sportively characterized men of their office. However it may be as to mock-turtle, the wine, which is a mocker, seems to be in some disfavor with them. An application was made for a tavern-licence, including the privilege of selling intoxicating drinks. This application was backed by all the influence of his Honor the Mayor, who is sincerely, but inexcusably, deluded on this point. But the entire Board voted to refuse the petition. Of such Aldermen there cannot be too much ! May their weight never be lighter, and their shadows never be less ! Boston is still the most puritanical city of its size on earth.

Letter of Hon. Henry Clay.—The open accession, as some will deem it, of this distinguished and influential statesman to the cause of emancipation, is a sign of the times. Slave-holding, that huge and inert mass of oppression, is at last decidedly tottering to its fall. In due time, its downfall will become rapid and resistless ; and the whole enormous mass roll off from the bosom of our fair land, into the abyss which engulfs all effete and exploded delusions. Some will say, that Mr. Clay's scheme of emancipation is impracticable, and that it only illustrates the rigorous spirit of slave-holding. Though this may be true, we say again, that it is an important sign of the times, that such a man as Mr. Clay feels impelled to consider the termination of slavery as an event to be desired, and in some way to be effected.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

THE subscribers feel it to be of great importance, that there should emanate from this city, a periodical like the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY, devoted to the interests of sound doctrine and practical piety. It will be seen, that, under the new arrangements for conducting it, several of our number, including the former Editor of the work, have assumed the direct responsibility of the editorial department. The others stand ready to afford them all the countenance and aid in their power. And we hereby invite the co-operation of our brethren in New England and elsewhere, in promoting the circulation of the Observatory, and rendering it all that can be desired as an organ of general communication with the public. We live in a day of great excitements, novel speculations, and surprising changes, fitted to awaken our fears as well as our hopes, and calling for the utmost vigilance and activity on the part of the friends of religion, to check every evil tendency, and to favor all the better developments of the times. It is our hope, that this publication, by the strenuous support of our brethren in the ministry and the Churches, may prove a strong defence of the truths we love, and a permanent depository of such historical facts and spirited reasonings as will afford a powerful support to orthodox Congregationalism, in its simple, spiritual and scriptural belief and order.

Boston, Dec. 4, 1848.

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J. B. WATERBURY,
A. C. THOMPSON,
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CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY.

THE Publishers of the CHRISTIAN OBSERVATORY take great pleasure in announcing to the subscribers for that work, and to the public at large, that they have made arrangements to carry it on with increased efficiency and strength. At a meeting of ministers such as could be conveniently assembled, the opinion was unanimously expressed, that the work must go on under such auspices as should ensure it a vigorous support, and render it, as far as may be, an accredited organ for that portion of the religious community which may be interested therein. The following gentlemen were appointed to take the editorial charge of the work : Rev. N. Adams, D. D., Rev. J. A. Albro, D. D., Rev. E. Beecher, D. D., Rev. E. N. Kirk, Rev. A. W. McClure, Rev. W. A. Stearns, and Rev. A. C. Thompson.

These gentlemen have accepted the duty, and have made such a distribution of the labor, as to divide it equally among them, and ensure from each his appropriate share of effort. This arrangement, therefore, being by no means nominal, will bring into the pages of the OBSERVATORY a rich variety of gifts and talents for the edification of its readers. Under these circumstances, the Publishers again offer it to the cordial patronage of the friends of a sound evangelical literature, and of the principles of the honored puritan fathers of New England.

The Publishers solicit the aid of Pastors of Churches, as indispensable to the success of the work. From a desire to favor them as a class, it is furnished to ministers on terms far below what could be afforded, but for the hope of their active support. If each of the five hundred ministers to whom it is sent were to interest himself so far as to obtain for us at least one subscriber, we should feel it as a reciprocating favor, and regard it as the most useful and gratifying of the agencies employed in our behalf.

J. V. BEANE & CO.,
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VOLUME THIRD.

All new subscribers, paying in advance, may have the first and second volumes, neatly bound in cloth, for one dollar a volume. As we shall hereafter print no more copies than are wanted for actual circulation, we shall not, in future, be able to furnish any back volumes except the first and second as above mentioned.